

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 6164

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SUBJECT: GOT FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTY REPLIES TO
SECRETARY'S LETTER ON LAW OF THE SEA

REF: STATE 190812, TUNIS 5444

1. GOT FOREIGN MINISTRY ADVISES US THAT FOREIGN MINSTER
HABIB CHATTY'S REPLY TO SECRETARY'S AUGUST 2 LETTER ON
LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE WILL BE HAND CARRIED TO
WASHINGTON SEPTEMBER 4 BY AMBASSADOR HEDDA.
FOLLOWING FOR DEPARTMENT'S ADVANCE INFORMATION IS EMBASSY
ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF TEXT OF CHATTY REPLY:

"MR. SECRETARY:

ALLOW ME TO THANK YOU FOR THE LETTER YOU SO KINDLY
SENT ME ON THE SUBJECT OF THE CONFERENCE ON THE LAW
OF THE SEA.

"I NOTE WITH SATISFACTION THAT WE ARE, AS YOUR ARE,
ENTIRELY CONVINCED OF THE NECESSITY OF A NEW REGIME
FOR THE LAW OF THE SEA, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME
RECOGNIZING THE URGENCY AND GREAT DIFFICULTIES
INVOLVED.

"IN THE ABSENCE OF A JURIDICAL CONDIFICATION, EFFORTS
WERE MADE AFTER THE CARACAS CONFERENCE TO SETTLE
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THIS QUESTION BY TAKING POLITICAL DECISIONS, BUT

THIS ONLY REVEALED EVEN MORE THE DIVERSITY OF CLAIMS
AND THE COMPLEXITY OF ISSUES AT STAKE WHICH YOU SO
RIGHTLY MENTIONED IN YOUR LETTER.

"THE PROFOUND INTERNATIONAL CHANGES NOT TAKING
PLACE CALL FOR A NEW COMMITMENT AND MAKE INTERNATIONAL
SOLIDARITY A CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

"THE LIST OF SUBJECTS RELATED TO THE LAW OF THE SEA
WHICH WAS PREPARED BY THE DEEP SEABEDS COMMITTEE
DURING THE 27TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY INCLUDES
A GREAT MANY PROBLEMS AND COVERS TRADITIONAL ASPECTS
OF THE LAW OF THE SEA, SUCH AS THE TERRITORIAL SEA,
STRAITS, THE CONTINENTAL SHELF, THE HIGH SEAS, ETC.
SOME NEW ASPECTS WERE INTRODUCED UNDER THE PRESSURE
OF NEW NEEDS LIKE THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL
REGIME, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MECHANISM FOR THE
EXPLOITATION OF DEEP SEABED RESOURCES, THE POSSIBLE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EXCLUSIVE OR PREFERENTIAL
ECONOMIC ZONE, THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF LANDLOCKED
COUNTRIES, THOSE OF STATES CALLED DISFAVORED, AND,
FINALLY, THE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES.

"THE INTENTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS TO
CONSIDER ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS WITH THE PURPOSE OF
FINDING GLOBAL SOLUTION, BUT AS A RESULT OF THE
INTERACTION OF THE DIFFERENT PROBLEMS ON ONE HAND AND THE
INTERDEPENDENCE OF STATES ON THE OTHER, THE TASK HAS
BECOME DIFFICULT. THE PARTICIPATION OF 150 SOVEREIGN
STATES AND SOME THIRTY OBSERVERS INCLUDING VARIOUS
MOVEMENTS OF NATIONAL LIBERATION IS GRAPHIC EVIDENCE
OF THE IMPORTANCE ACCORDED TO THIS PROBLEM.

"IN ANY CASE, I WOULD LIKE, MR. SECRETARY
TO EXPRESS TO YOU MY TOTAL AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE
TO BE ACCORDED THIS VITAL QUESTION OF THE LAW OF THE
SEA AND ASSURE YOU AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE TUNISIAN
GOVERNMENT FOLLOWS WITH ATTENTION THE EVOLUTION OF THE
WORK OF THIS CONFERENCE. FOR THIS PURPOSE, DETAILED
INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO OUR DELEGATION TO
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COOPERATE WITH YOUR DELEGATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS
AND TO COMBINE ITS EFFORTS WITH YOUR DELEGATION
TOWARD REACHING AGREEMENT ON THE TEXTS OF CONVENTIONS
SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE.

"THIS COOPERATION AT THE LEVEL OF OUR TWO DELEGATIONS,
WHICH COULD EVENTUALLY BE RAISED TO THE MINISTERIAL
LEVEL, IS NATURALLY A PART OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE

UNDERSTANDING AND THE MUTAL INTEREST WHICH SO HAPPILY
CHARACTERIZES YOUR RELATIONS.

"PLEASE ACCEPT, MR. SECRETARY AND DEAR FRIEND,
THE EXPRESSION OF MY VERY HIGH CONSIDERATION.

SINCERELY YOURS,

HABIB CHATTY."

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